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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASMARA 000494

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E

LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/07/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: A SORDID TALE OF UNMEE CORRUPTION

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Classified By: CDA Melinda C. Tabler-Stone for Reason 1.4 (d)

1. (C) Summary: A well-placed UNMEE contact recounted a long and twisted tale of personal empire building and corruption during UNMEE's presence in Eritrea. High-ranking UNMEE officials enhanced their careers at the expense of the mission and personally profited from their positions. The contact requested a USG inquiry into his allegations. End Summary.

TOO CLOSE TO THE GOE?

2. (C) An UNMEE contact told Emboff in a long-winded and one-sided conversation about two highly placed UNMEE personnel manipulating the mission for their own personal benefit. The contact said UNMEE Acting Special Representative (SR) Azouz Ennifar maintained close personal relationships with unnamed Government of Ethiopia (GOE) MFA officials dealing directly with UNMEE matters. Ennifar allegedly used these relationships to persuade the GOE to block at least two high-level UNMEE SR appointments (a Swede and a Namibian) until he was appointed Acting SR. The contact surmised Ennifar colluded with the GOE by trading their career advancement assistance for enhanced GOE inside access to the highest level of UNMEE operations.

BUILD-UP ADDIS, TEAR DOWN ASMARA

3. (C) After his appointment, Ennifar worked during UNMEE Deputy Special Representative Lebohang Moleko's absences from Eritrea to remove all of UNMEE's Asmara-based political and policy portfolios to Addis, and reduce Asmara to an administrative QoQt. The contact believed Ennifar was motivated by personal reasons, since he wanted his family to reside in Addis rather than Asmara. By making Asmara a satellite office of Addis, Ennifar attempted to avoid an Asmara posting.

THE GSE/UNMEE RELATIONSHIP DETERIORATES

4. (C) The contact said the UNMEE/GSE relationship deteriorated in 2007 during an Ennifar visit to Asmara. Ennifar supposedly installed secure communication equipment in his room at the Intercontinental Hotel without Eritrean government approval. When the equipment was discovered, Eritrean security officers confronted Ennifar, and a shouting match ensued in the hotel's lobby. The contact believes the subsequent deterioration of UNMEE/GSE relations was not a coincidence.

DARFUR - ENNIFAR'S NEXT ASSIGNMENT

5. (U) On September 15, the African Union (AU) Commission Chair and United Nations Secretary General announced Ennifar's appointment as Deputy Joint AU-UN Mediator for Darfur.

ORGANIZED THEFT OF UNMEE PROPERTY

16. (C) The contact also said UNMEE's Asmara Administrative Officer, Maurice Critchley, used his office to pursue personal financial gain. Critchley always connived with Ennifar in Moleko's absence to remove Asmara's political portfolios to Addis. After removing the political portfolios, Critchley would preside as the primary UNMEE officer in Asmara, allowing him more latitude to pursue his personal agenda. According to the contact, Critchley initiated over twenty administrative actions against political personnel to drive them out Asmara, and micromanaged operations to hide his illegal activities.

17. (C) UNMEE officials also allegedly engaged in shady dealings while acquiring a building in Addis. UNMEE security personnel approved three buildings for security reasons, but UNMEE management approved instead a building the c(n(act describ#d#as "obviously less secure to the untrained eye." The contact believes the building owner paid a kickback or other unauthorized payment to the UNMEE administrative officer.

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18. (C) A different UNMEE contact (contact 2) informed Emboff that theft and pilfering of UNMEE's equipment is a serious problem. In one case, thieves stole 200 tires from a locked storage container on a guarded UNMEE compound. Contact 2 said the theft was an inside job, given the level of security on both the container and the compound. When asked whether Critchley was involved in either this or other cases of theft, contact 2 said, "There is no appearance that he's doing anything about the thefts," implying Critchley's involvement.

19. (C) Comment: The contact has historically provided good information to Emboffs, but in this case he may have a personal axe to grind. Critchley initiated administrative actions against the contact, attempted to permanently move his position to Addis, and even attempted to eliminate his position. Given the seriousness of the allegations and his good history of dealing with Emboffs, the contact's story deserves consideration. End Comment.
TABLERSTONE